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New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support

A monitoring mechanism to review commitments towards Africa's development needs

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to paragraph 39 of the political declaration adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 63/1 and reiterated in its resolution 64/258, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly at its sixty-fourth session a comprehensive report on "Africa's development needs: state of implementation of various commitments, challenges and the way forward" with a view to formulating a mechanism to review the full and timely implementation of all commitments related to Africa's development by the sixty-fifth session.

The report illustrates the rationale for such a monitoring mechanism from the perspectives of the African countries and their development partners to encourage the implementation of the commitments, promote partnership and mutual accountability, and enhance aid effectiveness.

After revisiting key concepts on monitoring commitments in the African context, the report reviews major monitoring mechanisms, highlighting objectives, thematic coverage, analytical approaches, participation modalities and gaps and challenges.

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The report outlines the nature, scope, priorities and institutional arrangements for an improved monitoring mechanism that builds on existing processes aiming at making them more inclusive. Its value added is based on greater inclusiveness, leveraging on the political authority and legitimacy of the General Assembly and its universal membership. The improved mechanism involves formal periodic reviews, either under the aegis of the Assembly in the context of its agenda item on the New Partnership for Africa's Development or on a subsegment of the Development Cooperation Forum, which is held every other year under the purview of the Economic and Social Council, to be dedicated exclusively to issues on Africa. The mechanism entails additional functions for the Secretariat and consequently the need for incremental resources. Recommendations for consideration by the Assembly are set out in the last section of the report.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report is prepared in compliance with paragraph 39 of the political declaration adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 63/1, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly at its sixty-fourth session a comprehensive report on "Africa's development needs: state of implementation of various commitments, challenges and the way forward" with a view to formulating a mechanism to review the full and timely implementation of all commitments related to Africa's development by the sixty-fifth session. The political declaration was adopted at the high-level meeting on Africa's development needs, which was held at United Nations Headquarters on 22 September 2008 and was attended by Heads of State and Government. The Assembly reiterated that request in its resolution 64/258 entitled "New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support".

2. The present report builds on two previous reports of the Secretary-General each entitled "Africa's development needs: state of implementation of various commitments, challenges and the way forward" (A/63/130 and A/64/208). The reports emphasized that meeting Africa's development needs was within reach, provided that African States and external partners acted with determination to turn existing commitments into concrete actions. The present report makes the case for and further develops the concept of an improved monitoring mechanism.

3. On various occasions, the General Assembly and the Secretary-General have stressed the need for bolder steps to strengthen the global partnership for development in Africa, calling for improved monitoring and stronger efforts for mutual accountability. The time is therefore ripe to propose, pursuant to the request of the Assembly, an improved monitoring mechanism of the commitments to Africa's development at the United Nations system-wide level.

4. The improved mechanism builds on existing processes. Its value added will come primarily from leveraging the political authority and legitimacy of the General Assembly and its universal membership to encompass contributions and results from existing monitoring arrangements and make them more inclusive, especially regarding the increasingly important role of other development partners in Africa. The mechanism will also generate momentum and increase the credibility of existing monitoring mechanisms. The proposed mechanism complements the work of the Millennium Development Goals Africa Steering Group, which strives to mobilize international support for the achievement of the Goals in Africa.

5. Setting up the improved mechanism will involve additional functions for the Secretariat, in particular the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, such as compiling and synthesizing the results and outputs from existing monitoring frameworks, undertaking further analytical work as required and organizing meetings of experts and other stakeholders in preparing for General Assembly meetings. Additional financial and human resources will be required to fulfil the above tasks.

6. The present report has greatly benefited from comments and suggestions provided by Member States, the Commission of the African Union, the Planning and Coordinating Agency of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD),[1]

[1] As part of the process to integrate NEPAD into African Union structures and processes, the NEPAD secretariat was recently transformed into the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency.

the African Development Bank (AfDB), the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the United Nations Inter-Agency/Departmental Task Force on Africa, non-governmental organizations, academia and the private sector.

II. Rationale of a monitoring mechanism

7. Major international events in the earlier part of the current decade have helped to shape a new approach to development partnership and accountability. The adoption of the Millennium Development Goals in 2000 was followed by major international conferences on financing for development (Monterrey, Mexico, 2002), sustainable development (Johannesburg, South Africa, 2002) and multilateral trade liberalization (Doha, Qatar, 2001), which enhanced understanding of the broad strategies and policies needed to attain the Goals. Concomitantly, with the adoption of NEPAD, African leaders recognized that good governance was fundamental to long-term growth. The African Peer Review Mechanism was launched in 2002 to promote adherence to and fulfilment of this key commitment.

8. The Monterrey Consensus set out a new aid paradigm based on partnership and accountability: developing countries would commit to sound policies and good governance while developed countries would commit to increase their financial support. Improving aid effectiveness has therefore become a central goal. Following the 2003 Rome Declaration on Harmonization and the 2004 joint Marrakech memorandum on managing for development results, in 2005, more than 100 signatories endorsed the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, which covers, at its core, the commitment to change the way development partners and recipient Governments do business together. The third High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, held in Accra in 2008 took stock of progress and built on the Paris and Rome Declarations to accelerate the pace of change and further enhance aid effectiveness.

9. As a result, the impact of these collective efforts on the lives of poor people is receiving increasing scrutiny. Delivery of aid and greater accountability in the use of development resources has received most of the attention. More broadly, the overall development dialogue has witnessed a shift from a concentration on inputs and immediate outputs to a focus on achieving outcomes and long-term impacts. Monitoring has also gradually shifted from documenting delivery of commitments to a broader evaluation of the impact of development programmes. Monitoring commitments by Africa and its development partners has helped create and reinforce channels of communication and dialogue leading to improvements in development practices and adjustments in policies and actions where required.

A. African perspectives

10. Although monitoring as currently practised largely focuses on reporting and documenting achievements and failures and does not per se trigger new actions or new implementation efforts, it is still instrumental to fostering the implementation of the various commitments towards Africa's development. Not only is Africa lagging behind other developing regions in terms of the Millennium Development

Goals targets but most African countries also run a serious risk of missing several of them by the deadline of 2015. To make matters worse, the global financial and economic crisis has had a major impact on the fiscal situation of many African economies by either weakening the rate of progress or, in a few cases, even reversing progress already made. Renewed efforts are therefore necessary to promote delivery on existing commitments by Africa's development partners and stronger leadership by African Governments and consequently more rigorous monitoring of the implementation of those commitments and their impacts on development.

11. African States and institutions have often highlighted the fundamental nature of monitoring to the sustainable development of the region. Adopting the Abuja Commitment to Action in May 2006, African ministers of finance stated that monitoring commitments on the basis of mutual accountability was critical to ensuring that Africa stayed on track and achieved success. The NEPAD Framework also called for the establishment of complementary and independent monitoring tools to ensure that donor performance was kept on track and that official development assistance flows were effectively utilized by recipient countries.

12. Africa has more limited access to private capital flows from abroad than other regions, relying more on aid as a major source of external development finance. Combined with the weak human and institutional capacity prevailing in many African countries, delivery of external financial and technical support has a much greater influence on the pace of Africa's progress towards the Millennium Development Goals, making it even more important to monitor the international support for Africa than for other developing regions.

13. Significant shortcomings are reported in the fulfilment of commitments by Africa's development partners, making a stronger case for renewed efforts by partner countries. For instance, while total official development assistance reached a record high of $122.3 billion in 2008, of which about $44 billion went to Africa, the Group of Eight commitment to double aid to Africa is still far from being reached. Depending on the years, Africa has received from 32 to 35 per cent of the global increase in official development assistance since 2004, significantly below the 50 per cent announced at the Group of Eight Summit held in Gleneagles, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

14. Governance weaknesses are a major constraint to Africa's development. African Governments have highlighted the need to monitor issues of governance, transparency and the rule of law. Twenty-nine African States have joined the African Peer Review Mechanism, an instrument designed for peer- and self-monitoring at the national and continental levels on issues related to democracy and political, economic and corporate governance.

15. In the same vein, in 2002, the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee[2] requested ECA and OECD to undertake joint reviews of development effectiveness within a framework for mutual accountability between Africa and its development partners, giving rise to the Mutual Review of Development Effectiveness.

[2] The NEPAD Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee has been renamed the Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee as part of the African Union/NEPAD integration outcomes.

16. Africa has made good progress on its commitments to promoting growth, investing in the health and education of its people, improving governance and mobilizing resources. There has been significant progress towards some of the Millennium Development Goals but overall progress has been uneven. Capacity shortages remain a key constraint in all areas. Moreover, the challenge of achieving sustainable development in Africa is inextricably linked to what happens in the wider global economy. While growth in most African economies appears to have rebounded in 2010, the trend towards fiscal consolidation in several OECD countries will likely affect external support to Africa and negatively impact its growth prospects in the medium term. And although it contributes least to global carbon emissions, Africa is expected to be profoundly affected by the consequences of climate change.

17. Besides its key role in mutual accountability, monitoring also contributes to advocacy, which, when performed by national stakeholders including non-governmental organizations, can help to strengthen domestic accountability. From the perspectives of African Governments, monitoring also contributes to evidence-based policymaking on the part of the authorities. The two additional benefits of monitoring, namely, advocacy/domestic accountability and evidence-based policymaking, are important factors of development.

B. Perspectives of the international community

18. Monitoring mechanisms are justified from the perspective of the international community to ensure the efficient use of resources in developing countries, facilitate the mobilization of public resources and keep the political momentum for development assistance in partner countries.

19. In donor countries, development assistance competes with other domestic priorities. An effective monitoring mechanism can help to demonstrate that aid is working and providing value for money. More generally, monitoring has shifted from a narrow "input-driven" focus on delivery of resources or capacity support to a broader objective targeting aid effectiveness, thus helping to reassure the public in donor countries that development assistance is yielding the expected results. The incorporation of results-based management throughout development assistance work is increasingly being adopted. This further strengthens the case for monitoring.

20. At the Group of Eight Summit held in L'Aquila, Italy, in 2009, leaders emphasized the importance of accountability for the effective use of international assistance and committed to accelerating implementation of aid effectiveness commitments, adopting a full and comprehensive mutual accountability mechanism by 2010, monitoring progress and strengthening the effectiveness of their actions with a strong focus on in-country implementation.

21. From the perspectives of partner agencies involved in designing the global aid architecture, monitoring is seen as an effective tool for holding their members accountable and for maintaining the political momentum in efforts towards achieving development goals in poor countries. The two monitoring surveys of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness have led to the recognition that in order for aid to become truly effective, stronger and more balanced, accountability mechanisms are required at both the country and international levels, where providers and recipients of aid can be held mutually accountable to each other.

22. Monitoring also provides critical inputs to advocacy, a role played by multilateral development agencies such as the United Nations, international financial institutions, regional development banks and non-governmental organizations. Notable examples are the Global Monitoring Report by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, the Millennium Development Goals annual reports, the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus and the Millennium Development Goals Africa Steering Group.

C. Improved support for monitoring development goals

23. The focus of monitoring mechanisms on measurable development goals implies the need for more and better statistics to inform policy and monitor progress. However, the new demands placed on national statistical systems exceed the capacities of many countries. External support has helped, but often progress has not been sustained. At present, there are important gaps in data, especially with respect to access to basic social services and infrastructure services in developing countries and especially in Africa.

24. Notable initiatives in this area include, from the international perspective, the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (PARIS21), created in 1999, and the Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics agreed in 2004. From the African side, major efforts include the adoption of the African Charter on Statistics by the Heads of State and Government of the African Union in 2009, the ECA-based African Center for Statistics, created under the initiative of the African ministers of finance, and, more recently, of AfricaInfo, established by the Commission of the African Union in collaboration with the United Nations Fund for Children (UNICEF) and designed to facilitate the development of statistics in Africa.

25. In the context of the response to the global economic crisis, the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination has launched the establishment of a vulnerability monitoring and alert mechanism to respond to an identified gap in information pertaining to the effects of the current crisis on the world's most vulnerable populations.

III. Some conceptual issues on monitoring

26. The monitoring of commitments involves recording the fulfilment or non-fulfilment of Government and development partner commitments to support Africa's development. In the context of aid effectiveness and results-based management, monitoring has, however, taken a broader perspective involving mutual accountability, which binds countries and their development partners through shared objectives and mutual commitments. The Paris Declaration has further expanded this concept by linking mutual accountability to domestic accountability. Not only are developing country Governments and their development partners expected to be accountable to each other but they must also be accountable to their own constituencies. While commitments are generally not of a contractual nature, mutual accountability, further extended to domestic accountability, provides the basis for making a compelling case for delivering commitments by Governments

and their development partners and for more active participation by other stakeholders in monitoring the delivery of commitments.

27. The review or monitoring mechanism called for by the General Assembly reflects the resolve to encourage and indirectly exert pressure on Member States to follow up their commitments to Africa's development and does not contemplate any "enforcement" function. But since most commitments are "voluntary" and therefore not binding, monitoring and the concept of mutual accountability play a critical role in measuring progress in their implementation.

28. Conceptually, monitoring the delivery of commitments can be conceived in different ways. The narrowest perspective focuses on the disbursement of an amount of aid or the implementation of a specific action or measure. Because funding issues have captured most attention, there has been a greater focus on input indicators, sometimes at the expense of more meaningful concerns about outcomes and impacts. A second group of indicators of commitments focuses on processes (for example, the adoption or ratification of a law). The focus on results-based management and development effectiveness has led to more attention to output or outcome indicators but they are more difficult to assess.

29. In terms of partnership and the related concept of mutual accountability, monitoring in the context of Africa's development should not focus only on commitments made by development partners but also on promises and commitments by African Governments, which have primary responsibility in promoting economic and social progress. At the country level, some modest progress in monitoring the implementation of national development strategies has been reported through annual progress reports on poverty reduction strategies, other national policy review mechanisms and, for a few but growing number of countries, the use of country-based results-monitoring frameworks such as the performance assessment frameworks, which involve domestic stakeholders, such as parliamentarians and civil society organizations, and the Government.

IV. Review of existing monitoring mechanisms and processes

30. The international community, African Governments and other stakeholders have put in practice a wide range of different mechanisms to monitor commitments towards Africa's development. Established with different objectives, existing monitoring mechanisms vary greatly in terms of: (a) thematic coverage; (b) whether the focus is on inputs or more broadly on outcomes and impacts; (c) the extent of analysis and data; and (d) stakeholder participation. Section IV of the present report does not attempt to provide an exhaustive review of all existing monitoring mechanisms[3] but focuses on the ones that are generally acknowledged by the development community as the most effective and the ones that are relevant to Africa's development.

[3] For a more complete list of monitoring mechanisms, refer to the annex to the present report.

A. Comprehensive mechanisms and processes

31. The Mutual Review of Development Effectiveness is a report prepared jointly by ECA and OECD at the request of the Heads of State and Government of the NEPAD Implementation Committee in 2002 to monitor on a biennial basis the progress of efforts on both sides of the development partnership. Covering 15 sectors, the 2009 Review assembles commitments by Africa and the development partners according to sector, reviews what has been done by both sides to deliver their respective commitments, assesses the results by sector and identifies key future priority actions. Publication of the report was preceded by consultations with academic and research institutions and civil society. The previous report was published in January 2009. Publication of the next report has been brought forward slightly from the normal two-year cycle so that the review can serve as a background document for the High-level Plenary Meeting of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly, to be held in September 2010.

32. The Africa Peer Review Mechanism, whose mandate is to encourage conformity in regard to political, economic and corporate governance values, codes and standards among African countries, is perhaps one of the most comprehensive of the existing monitoring mechanisms, in part owing to its broad thematic coverage as well as the processes, procedures, policies and the multiple layers of validation purposely built into it. The Africa Peer Review Mechanism not only covers all the different areas of governance — political, economic, corporate and socio-economic governance — but also the processes and institutions that are required by the Mechanism in order to undertake a valid review. To date, 29 countries have formally joined the Mechanism, and 12 have been peer-reviewed.

33. The Africa Partnership Forum was established by the Group of Eight at the summit held in Evian, France, in 2003 to support an expanding senior policy dialogue between Africa and OECD countries together with the African Union, NEPAD, the European Commission (EC), IMF, OECD, the United Nations, the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization (WTO) and ECA. The Forum meets twice a year, during the second quarter of the year to set directions for the Group of Eight-Africa partnership as an input to the Group of Eight meeting, and in the fourth quarter of the year to monitor the delivery of Group of Eight commitments made in previous years covering different sectors each year. Despite the relative success of the Forum in playing the dual role of setting strategies and monitoring commitments, the fact that other development partners are still excluded from this senior-level Forum with Africa poses important challenges in terms of coverage.

34. Unlike the two previous monitoring mechanisms, which are specific to Africa, the annual Global Monitoring Report produced by the World Bank and IMF provides regular monitoring of progress on the policy agenda by key actors, namely, developing and developed countries and multilateral agencies, the priorities for action and the accountabilities of the key actors in achieving the Millennium Development Goals targets on a worldwide basis. Producing the report is a statistically rigorous exercise; despite the comprehensiveness of its analytical framework, however, the report does not track the progress of all the commitments. The report only provides partial information on Africa.

35. In an effort to bolster its accountability, the Group of Eight initiated its own monitoring process in 2007, starting with a report on health in 2007, expanding to food security, water, health and education in 2009. The first Group of Eight Accountability Report (also known as the Muskoka Accountability Report) gives an account of Group of Eight performance in implementing key development-related commitments, assesses the results of Group of Eight actions and identifies lessons learned for future reporting. The report is restricted to the review of Group of Eight commitments and does not assess the global progress towards meeting international development goals.

36. The European Union (EU) and the African Union have also developed mechanisms to monitor the implementation of the EU-Africa Strategic Partnership adopted in 2007 at the EU-Africa summit. There is, however, the need for EU and the African Union to link the strategy to other international high-level events.

37. Civil society organizations are also involved with monitoring. The DATA Report, which is produced by the advocacy organization (Debt, AIDS, Trade, Africa) and which subsequently merged with the United Kingdom-based grass-roots organization ONE, analyses, collectively and individually, the progress by the Group of Eight towards their commitments to Africa. This data-intensive and comprehensive exercise has the advantage of offering more detailed information on projected aid disbursements for the following year based on direct consultations with disbursing ministries in the Group of Eight countries. However, it focuses exclusively on commitments made by the Group of Eight countries and overlooks the ones made by other OECD-Development Assistance Committee partners and by non-Development Assistance Committee donors. By design, the DATA Report does not monitor commitments made by African countries.

38. Another monitoring exercise is conducted by the Africa Progress Panel, which was established in 2008; former Secretary-General of the United Nations Kofi Annan is its current chair. Designed as a vehicle to monitor progress in Africa's development performance, the annual report of the Panel provides updates in the areas of economic growth, governance, education, health, peace and security, food and nutrition security, climate change and development finance. The report addresses broad relationships between performance and what can be loosely defined as actions that African Governments need to undertake in order to improve the continent's development performance.

39. African civil society organizations are also involved with monitoring. The African Monitor, a South African-based body established in 2006, primarily focuses on donor commitments made since 2005, as well as commitments by African Governments, in particular those made collectively under the African Union and regional groupings. Unlike the other monitoring reports, the Development Support Monitor, which was issued in 2007 and 2009, tracks and catalogues commitments by donors and African Governments from a grass-roots-focused, pan-African perspective. In terms of coverage, the report focuses only on key thematic areas, such as poverty, food security and agriculture, financing for development, regional integration and trade, education and health, leaving other commitments unattended.

B. Theme-specific mechanisms and processes

40. Governance is currently being monitored by some 30 different processes, with the most influential ones being the Ibrahim Index of African Governance, the ECA African Governance Report and the Worldwide Governance Indicators.[4] The Ibrahim Index is an instrument voluntarily acceded to by member States of the African Union as an African self-monitoring mechanism. It provides a comprehensive ranking of African countries on the basis of governance indicators regrouped in four main pillars: safety and rule of law, participation and human rights, sustainable economic opportunity and human development. The African Governance Report is a biennial publication that assesses and monitors progress towards good governance in 35 African countries. The World Bank's Governance Indicators covers six dimensions of governance: voice and accountability, political stability and absence of violence, government effectiveness, regulatory quality, rule of law and control of corruption.

41. Commitments on development aid and their delivery are tracked by the OECD Development Assistance Committee, which monitors on a yearly basis the volume, origin and types of aid and other resource flows to over 150 recipient countries, including all African countries. On aid effectiveness, OECD publishes, on an irregular basis, the Survey on Monitoring the Paris Declaration and compiles the Survey on Harmonization and Alignment. The data reported by the Development Assistance Committee are the most authoritative information on the issue of aid effectiveness.

42. The Sub-Saharan Africa Regional Economic Outlook, a report published biannually by IMF, is an important source of information and analysis on the economic and financial performance of sub-Saharan Africa. Although it does not measure performance against specific commitments, the report assesses key economic and financial indicators and is produced in conjunction with the IMF World Economic Outlook.

C. Monitoring the Millennium Development Goals

43. The Millennium Development Goals are the cornerstone of current development practice and embody vital commitments made by world leaders in 2000 at the United Nations Millennium Summit and reviewed at the 2005 World Summit. Their progress is regularly monitored by various agencies, with the annual assessment reports by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat being the most authoritative since they rely on a broad database collected by various international organizations within and outside the United Nations system. In addition, the World Bank annually publishes the World Development Indicators, a comprehensive statistical overview of development. Other publications cover the specific context of Africa, such as the annual Millennium Development Goals Africa regional report, jointly produced by the United Nations Development Programme

[4] Other mechanisms include: Corruption Perceptions Index and Bribe Payers Index (Transparency International), Country Policy and Institutional Assessment (World Bank), Failed States Index (Foreign Policy and Fund for Peace), Gender Empowerment Measure (UNDP), Political Freedom (Freedom House), Public Sector Efficiency and Performance (European Central Bank), Uppsala Conflict Database (Uppsala University), or the Urban Governance Index (UN-Habitat).

(UNDP), the African Union, ECA and AfDB. Sector-specific reports focus exclusively on specific goals. For instance, the Millennium Development Goals Gap Task Force, which was created by the Secretary-General and integrates more than 20 United Nations agencies, annually compiles a progress report on a global partnership for development (Goal 8), whereas the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS publishes an annual report on the global AIDS epidemic (Goal 6) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization is responsible for the annual Education for All: Global Monitoring Report (Goal 2).

D. Strengths and limitations of existing monitoring arrangements: an assessment

44. The review shows that existing monitoring mechanisms or processes provide a rather extensive coverage of commitments made by African Governments and agencies and their development partners. Over time, as more information becomes available, the discernable trend is for monitoring to rely increasingly on quantitative analyses, although significant statistical gaps remain both in terms of coverage and timeliness. In addition, under the push for development policies and support to be more results-oriented, the monitoring of commitments has gradually moved from a narrow focus on inputs (for example, actions or policies) to efforts on measuring the outcomes and impacts and their relationship to the Millennium Development Goals, as well as on policies and/or actions taken to deliver on the commitments and the expected outcomes.

45. The review also highlights a number of limitations in existing monitoring arrangements (see table 1): (a) most mechanisms focus on a limited number of commitments; (b) inadequate coverage of other development partners that play an increasingly large role both in terms of volume and type of development support, particularly in Africa; (c) limited coverage of non-State agencies such as non-governmental organizations, parliamentarians and other groups whose role is particularly relevant for monitoring at the country level; and (d) inadequate involvement of African Governments and stakeholders in the mechanisms covered by the review. As indicated in section I above, this uneven participation may undermine both the ownership and legitimacy of many monitoring mechanisms.

Table 1
Strengths and limitations of existing multisectoral monitoring mechanisms

Monitoring mechanisms	*Strengths*	*Gaps and limitations*
Mutual Review of Development Effectiveness	• Provides good topical coverage (the 2010 Mutual Review of Development Effectiveness report includes 17 sectors) • Is based on the principle of partnership, focusing on commitments made by all sides	• Inadequate participation by the African side • Does not include non-Development Assistance Committee donors and other stakeholders • Lacks regularity: has not been published on a regular basis until recently

Monitoring mechanisms	*Strengths*	*Gaps and limitations*
	• Provides details on what has been done to deliver the commitments and what results have been achieved (by sector)	
	• Is based on extensive data and information	
African Peer Review Mechanism	• Provides broad thematic coverage on political, economic, corporate and social economic governance	• Has made limited progress in implementation of the national programme of action partly because of lack of resources
	• Offers a forum for exchange of best practices among countries participating in the African Peer Review Mechanism	
Africa Partnership Forum	• Has more legitimacy, with stronger African participation	• Provides partial coverage of the commitments
	• Has twin focuses: on setting strategic orientations and on monitoring	• Does not include non-Development Assistance Committee donors
Global Monitoring Report	• Has strong analytical framework and data	• Provides partial coverage of Africa
	• Monitoring includes roles and responsibilities of multilateral agencies	• Albeit very detailed, does not cover all commitments
Group of Eight Accountability Framework	• Sustained effort by the Group of Eight on improving delivery of commitments based on accountability	• Has low participation by recipient countries • Covers only Group of Eight commitments
Joint European Union-Africa Strategic Partnership	• Has a long-term policy framework based on political commitment at the highest level	• Covers only European Union-African Union commitments
DATA Report	• Provides very detailed information	• Covers only Group of Eight commitments
	• Helps to better understand Group of Eight commitments to Africa and their implications	

Monitoring mechanisms	*Strengths*	*Gaps and limitations*
Africa Progress Panel	• Provides comprehensive update of Africa's development performance	• Albeit comprehensive, does not cover all commitments • Has weak links between commitments by Africa and development performance
African Monitor	• Provides perspectives at the grass-roots level	• Provides partial coverage of commitments

V. Scope of and institutional arrangements for an improved monitoring mechanism

46. Building on the strengths and limitations of the existing monitoring mechanisms under review, an improved mechanism would have the following characteristics:

(a) Be based on the principles of partnership and mutual accountability, focusing not only on commitments by development partners but also on those made by African Governments;

(b) Cover a broad range of topics. Given the complexity of Africa's development requirements, an effective monitoring mechanism must by necessity be broad and cover all or most relevant sectors;

(c) Be grounded on reliable and timely data and, where data is available, assessments of outcomes and impacts instead of the more narrow focus on inputs;

(d) Promote the broad participation of all interested partners, including all interested African countries and a broad range of external partners, including non-Development Assistance Committee donors;

(e) Promote the participation of all relevant stakeholders including civil society, which is essential in terms of ownership, legitimacy and transparency;

(f) Promote a periodic review of accomplishments, through regular meetings and analytical reports, to oversee the implementation of commitments to Africa's development;

(g) Motivate and/or trigger actions by development partners and African Governments for better delivery of commitments and improve development effectiveness.

A. Scope of the improved monitoring mechanism

Thematic coverage

47. In order to be effective in terms of development results, the improved mechanism should monitor commitments on all or at least most of the areas identified as being critical to Africa's development in the 2008 political declaration on Africa's development needs, their implementation and impacts, including peace

and security; governance; resource mobilization and aid effectiveness; private sector development and access to finance; infrastructure; trade promotion and regional integration; environmental sustainability and climate change; food security and agricultural development; gender equality; health; education; and South-South cooperation.

Content of monitoring

48. Subject to the availability of information, the improved monitoring mechanism should strive to go beyond the monitoring of inputs, such as the disbursement of financial assistance or the implementation of a required policy by a country, to outputs and outcomes. It would promote a more systematic collection of relevant information including output and/or outcome indicators and stimulate a debate on development challenges that relate to those findings. Inputs from the Mutual Review of Development Effectiveness, the African Peer Review Mechanism and other African-based monitoring mechanisms would ensure that commitments by the international community and African countries receive equal scrutiny.

Methodological approach

49. The improved monitoring mechanism would not require the establishment of a new analytical system to monitor commitments to Africa's development but would build on existing arrangements, collecting information from current databases and using the convening power of the General Assembly for the participation of the most representative monitoring mechanisms at the review meetings. Besides emphasizing capacity-building and ownership through mutual accountability mechanisms between Africa and its development partners, the proposed mechanism would focus attention on the importance of domestic accountability relying on parliamentary oversight and other participatory practices to help shape the aid relationship as well as to enhance development results through transparency and accountability in terms of the use of all development resources, including domestic public resources.

Participation and political legitimacy

50. A basic characteristic of the improved monitoring mechanism is its capacity to include the participation of other relevant African stakeholders, such as the representatives of civil society organizations, academia and research institutions involved in monitoring Africa's development. Participation by such entities has been found to be either lacking or inadequate in existing monitoring mechanisms. The improved monitoring mechanism would involve two groups of Member States, African Governments and the external development partners, including non-Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development/Development Assistance Committee partners. The universality and legitimacy of the United Nations, where the review meeting on the mechanism is to be held, can be instrumental in helping to broaden the participation of all countries, while also opening a window for dialogue with non-State actors.

51. In addition to State and other public agencies, the participation of non-governmental organizations, both based in Africa and internationally, and other stakeholders such as parliamentarians in various monitoring exercises has become more frequent, in particular in cases where mutual accountability frameworks at the country level are active. As stated in the 2010 UNDP report entitled *Beyond the*

Midpoint: Achieving the Millennium Development Goals, civil society organizations are indispensable in monitoring practices since they demonstrate that development is fundamentally related to the achievement of greater political space and voice for those affected by poverty and exclusion. The participation of non-State representatives will need to be introduced in phases as the proposed mechanism matures and becomes increasingly more inclusive.

B. Institutional arrangements for the review of the improved monitoring mechanism

Choice of forum for the review

52. The present report considers several options regarding where the review should be held. These are set out in table 2, which shows the advantages and drawbacks of each of the various options. The four possible forums for holding the review are: (a) at the regular session of the General Assembly; (b) at a meeting under the purview of the Economic and Social Council; (c) at a special session of the General Assembly; and (d) at special reviews at the regional level involving the Commission of the African Union, the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency, the secretariat of the African Peer Review Mechanism, AfDB and ECA. The most appropriate options would be the regular session of the Assembly or a subsegment of the Development Cooperation Forum, which takes place every other year under the purview of the Council, and would be dedicated exclusively to Africa issues, appear to be the more appropriate options. Using the regular session of the Assembly as the forum not only responds to the clear mandate contained in resolutions 63/1 and 64/258 but also gives special political legitimacy to the process owing to the universality of its membership and its unique convening power. In this option, the review of the mechanism could be slotted under the agenda item entitled "New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support". Alternatively, the Development Cooperation Forum, which was established in 2005 by the Assembly in its resolution 60/1, in which the Assembly mandated the Council to convene a biennial high-level Development Cooperation Forum, is suitable for the review at a special segment of its session. The Development Cooperation Forum provides a platform for Member States to exchange experiences to support national development strategies, and while the Council has limited membership, the Development Cooperation Forum is open to participation by all relevant stakeholders and development partners.

Table 2
Alternative institutional arrangements for the review of commitments to Africa's development

Institutional arrangements	*Advantages*	*Constraints and drawbacks*
Regular session of the General Assembly	• Convening power of the United Nations • Universality of United Nations membership	• Limited visibility of the review because of the very broad agenda of the General Assembly

Institutional arrangements	*Advantages*	*Constraints and drawbacks*
	• Political legitimacy and mandate (General Assembly resolutions 63/1 and 64/258) • Analogous reviews undertaken by the Assembly at all levels, including at the level of Heads of State and Government	• Formal setting of Assembly arrangements and relative inflexibility in terms of the interaction with stakeholders other than Member States
Special meeting of the Economic and Social Council	• Convening power of the United Nations • Long-established focus on development issues • Experience in promoting new forms of dialogue on international development cooperation (for example, the Development Cooperation Forum) • Experience in establishing informal debates with non-State actors (for example, forums with non-governmental organizations, expert panels)	• Limited country membership (only 14 African countries are members) but the Development Cooperation Forum is open to the participation of all relevant stakeholders • Perception that the resolutions of the Economic and Social Council have lower status than the resolutions of the General Assembly
Special session of the General Assembly	• Same advantages as the regular session • More visibility of the review in a special session than in a regular session • More flexibility in special sessions than in regular sessions in interacting with stakeholders other than Member States	• Additional financial and organizational burdens for holding special sessions, compared with relying on established regular sessions • Difficulty in repeating review events with regular periodicity at special sessions

Institutional arrangements	*Advantages*	*Constraints and drawbacks*
Review at the regional level (African Union/ Economic Commission for Africa)	• Greater focus on African issues and perspectives • Broader participation by African Governments and regional and other institutions concerned with African development issues • Greater ownership by African countries	• Non-universality of the institutional arrangement and weaker convening power • Risk of perception of "reduced neutrality" compared with non-regional arrangements

Periodicity of the review

53. It is proposed that the review meetings to address the improved monitoring mechanism be held on a biennial basis. The experience of the United Nations as regards the periodicity of the review meetings for other mechanisms is diversified, ranging from the triennial (recently converted to quadrennial) comprehensive policy review for operational activities for development to the yearly meetings of the United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities. Most international conferences, including the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development, are held every five years. Given the nature of financial and non-financial commitments to support Africa's development efforts, a biennial review seems most appropriate since more frequent reviews would entail excessive costs and thus be unpractical. Given that the mechanism would rely on existing monitoring exercises, the biennial periodicity of the review would facilitate its harmonization with other mechanisms such as the Mutual Review of Development Effectiveness, which is updated on a two-year cycle.

Secretariat of the review

54. Various activities related to the organization of the review meetings would require adequate technical and logistical support. These activities would involve linkages with other organizations (including other development partners and representatives of existing monitoring mechanisms), the coordination, harmonization and interpretation of existing information on relevant commitments and their implementation, and the production of synthetic documentation and reporting for the review meetings. According to the request of the General Assembly in its resolutions 63/1 and 64/258, this support should not entail the establishment of any new institutions with the function of the secretariat of the review but would be covered by existing structures adequately strengthened. Even though the functions listed above can be entrusted to any entity within the Secretariat linked to the main constituency of the review, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa — in collaboration and consultation with other entities such as the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on Africa, the Economic Commission for Africa and the Commission of the African Union — is best placed to undertake the activities. Besides ensuring full ownership by Member States and especially by African countries involved in the process, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa is particularly suited to these functions in terms of expertise and familiarity with the issues.

Documentation required for the review

55. The review meetings would rely on documentation consisting of the following: (a) regular reports issued by the existing monitoring mechanisms; and (b) a specific report prepared by the review secretariat, which summarizes information from all existing sources on the fulfilment of commitments to Africa's development and their translation into concrete accomplishments.

Modalities of the review

56. The periodic review of commitments to Africa's development would have several manifestations, of which review meetings would be the most visible. To ensure the quality and legitimacy of the documentation for the review meetings, the preparation of the report, which would be submitted to either the General Assembly or the Development Cooperation Forum for review, would benefit from two rounds of consultations, first at the technical level, with specialists involved in monitoring and development, and later with a broad group of stakeholders through a participatory process. The comments and recommendations of the two consultative meetings would be included in the report to be submitted to the Assembly or the Development Cooperation Forum.

57. Three levels of meetings are envisaged. In chronological order, the technical level meeting would be the first meeting and would provide the opportunity for technical specialists representing selected existing monitoring mechanisms and specializing in African affairs to review and enrich the draft documentation produced by the review secretariat. Participation might include the Commission of the African Union, the African Monitor and selected representatives from civil society organizations based in Africa, AfDB, the United Nations system through the Inter-Agency Task Force on Africa, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, ECA and participants from the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, UNDP, other United Nations system organizations as required, OECD, the World Bank, IMF, as well as selected international non-governmental organizations, including the United Kingdom-based ONE on the international community side. The involvement of regional institutions from Africa and selected African and international scholars is essential in order to give legitimacy to the entire process.

58. Following the technical review, the report to be submitted either to the General Assembly or the Development Cooperation Forum would further benefit from the participatory dialogue extended to representatives of African and international non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations and other stakeholders who play a central role in helping to enhance the overall credibility and quality of the proposed mechanism process.

59. Last, but most important, the meeting at the intergovernmental or political level would involve representatives of all Member States that Member States consider appropriate for the review in order to ensure the visibility, relevance and political legitimacy of the review. It would form the core of a formal session of the General Assembly or the special segment of the Development Cooperation Forum, to which representatives of the African Union would participate.

Financial implications

60. The proposal set out above is based on the principle of cost-effectiveness and relies on the information and analyses available from existing analytical sources. Additional tasks and duties in terms of organizing the review meetings, including the preparation of reports, entail additional human and technical resources. Adequate additional financial resources will need to be programmed in the budget of the United Nations for this purpose.

VI. Conclusions and recommendations

61. The African continent is at a crossroads, given the intensity of its development needs and the additional impact of the global financial and economic crisis that has deteriorated the fiscal situation of many of its weak economies, hindering chances for significant progress. The present report recognizes the need for a renewed collective effort for a global partnership for Africa that is to build on strengthened mutual accountability and on more rigorous monitoring of commitments to achieve time-bound development objectives.

62. On the basis of the analysis contained in the present report and, in particular, the proposal set out in section V, the General Assembly may wish to consider:

(a) Establishing a review process, either under the aegis of the General Assembly or under the purview of the Economic and Social Council, as a subsegment of the Development Cooperation Forum fully dedicated to Africa, wherein commitments to Africa's development by both African Governments and their development partners and their implementation would be reviewed every two years at formal review meetings to be held either at the sessions of the Assembly, beginning with its sixty-eighth regular session, or at the Development Cooperation Forum, beginning with its session in 2014;

(b) Deciding that each review meeting would have the objective of assessing the extent to which commitments to promote Africa's development had been implemented and of generating consequent results in terms of achievements of development goals;

(c) That each review meeting proposed under subparagraph (a) above be organized in such a way as to include the following components: (i) a formal review at the intergovernmental level within the General Assembly or the special segment of the Development Cooperation Forum; (ii) a review of technical specialists involved with existing mechanisms that deal with monitoring the commitments to Africa's development and their implementation; and (iii) a dialogue among all other relevant stakeholders from Africa and within the international community who are interested in implementation of the commitments to Africa's development;

(d) Ensuring that, in organizing the various components of the review meetings, there is broad participation by major regional and subregional institutions, including the Commission of the African Union, AfDB, ECA, the African regional economic communities, other organizations of the United Nations system and institutions that manage key monitoring mechanisms relevant to Africa's development, and adequate representation by all development partners and national stakeholders, including non-governmental organizations, the private sector and other sectors of civil society;

(e) Requesting the Secretary-General to submit either to the General Assembly or to the Development Cooperation Forum, prior to the organization of each review meeting, a report summarizing information on fulfilment of the commitments to Africa's development and their translation into concrete accomplishments, building on information available from existing monitoring mechanisms, analytical sources and available documentation;

(f) Requiring that, in order to fulfil the function to establish the above-mentioned review process, including the organization of the review meetings, the preparation of the related report and all additional documentation, interaction with existing monitoring mechanisms and the dissemination of information to a wider audience, appropriate human and financial resources be programmed in the budget of the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa and be made available to support that function.

Annex

List of monitoring mechanisms

Comprehensive monitoring mechanisms

Africa Partnership Forum

Global Monitoring Report (World Bank-International Monetary Fund (IMF))

Mutual Review of Development Effectiveness in Africa Report (Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD))

Sector-specific monitoring mechanisms

Official development assistance flows and aid effectiveness

International Development Statistics (OECD)

Survey on Monitoring the Paris Declaration (OECD)

Governance and security

African Governance Report (ECA)

African Peer Review Mechanism

Afrobarometer

Cingranelli-Richards Human Rights Dataset

Commitment to Development Index (Center for Global Development)

Corruption Perceptions Index; or Bribe Payers Index (Transparency International)

Country Policy and Institutional Assessment (World Bank)

E-Governance Performance Index; global e-Government, or e-Government readiness reports (Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat)

Electoral Quotas for Women Database (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance)

Failed States Index (Foreign Policy and Fund for Peace)

Freedom of the Press Survey (Freedom House)

GAPS in Workers' Rights (International Labour Organization)

Gender Empowerment Measure (United Nations Development Programme)

Global Barometer Survey network (University of Strathclyde)

Global Integrity Index (Global Integrity)

Government at a Glance (OECD)

Human Rights Indicators (Danish Centre for Human Rights)

Ibrahim Index of African Governance

Political Constraint Index (University of Pennsylvania)

Political Freedom (Freedom House)

Political Terror Scale (Purdue University)

Public Integrity Index (Center for Public Integrity)

Public Sector Efficiency and Performance (European Central Bank)

Public Sector Value Model (Accenture)

State Failure Problem Set (University of Maryland)

Uppsala Conflict Database

Urban Governance Index (United Nations Human Settlements Programme)

Women in National Parliaments Statistical Archive (Inter-Parliamentary Union)

World Governance Assessment (United Nations University)

Worldwide Governance Indicators (World Bank)

Millennium Development Goals

Africa Millennium Development Goals progress reports

Development Cooperation Forum reports

Global Monitoring Report (World Bank, IMF)

Global Monitoring Report: Education for All (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization)

Human Development Report

Millennium Development Goals Gap Task Force Report

Millennium Development Goals Report

Report on the Global AIDS Epidemic (Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS)

State of World Population (United Nations Population Fund)

Economic indicators

African Economic Outlook (OECD, African Development Bank and ECA)

Country risk ratings (Economist Intelligence Unit) or International Country Risk Guide (Political Risk Services Group)

Ease of Doing Business Index (World Bank)

Economic Report on Africa (ECA and African Union)

Global Development Finance (World Bank)

Global Economic Prospects (World Bank)

Global Employment Trends (ILO)

Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (London Business School)

Global Financial Stability Report (IMF)

Growth Competitiveness Index (World Economic Forum)

Index of Economic Freedom (Heritage Foundation and *Wall Street Journal*)

International Trade Statistics (WTO)

Opacity Index (Price Waterhouse Coopers)

The Business Environment and Enterprise Performance Survey (European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the World Bank)

World Competitiveness Yearbook (Institute for Management Development)

World Development Report (World Bank)

World Economic Outlook; Regional Economic Outlook (IMF)

Civil society monitoring mechanisms

Africa Progress Panel, chaired by former Secretary-General of the United Nations Kofi Annan

African Monitor, a non-governmental organization based in South Africa. Publishes the biennial *Development Support Monitor*

Debt, AIDS, Trade, Africa (or DATA). Report by British non-governmental organization ONE. Annual report tracks progress on all dimensions of development (social, political and economic indicators)